



Bolivian government honors USAID's Director

Liliana Ayalde, Director of the U.S. Agency for International Development in Bolivia, received today two decorations from the Bolivian government: The Order of Public Health in Grand Official degree, and the Medal of Agricultural Merit. These medals were given in recognition of USAID's support for health and agriculture in the country.

Ayalde, who received the decorations from the Bolivian Ministers of Health and Agriculture, in two separate award ceremonies, expressed thanks and said the awards were the result of "ongoing work between the governments of Bolivia and the United States to generate economic opportunities and better living conditions for Bolivian people." USAID's cooperation in Bolivia amounts to over 100 million dollars annually.

"USAID's commitment has always been firm and determined. We are in Bolivia to work together with the Bolivians," she added.

USAID's cooperation seeks to reduce poverty and increase human development, especially among the most poverty-stricken groups within the Bolivian population, by means of improving market access and economic opportunities, improving the delivery of public services, increasing social protection and nutritional security, as well as strengthening citizen participation in public policy decision-making.

Within the health sector, direct cooperation with the government of Bolivia reached 28 million dollars in the last five years. A new agreement will enable the disbursement of an additional 44 million dollars until 2009, to be used especially in improving the health of mothers and children, fighting Chagas, malaria, dengue, tuberculosis, conducting health campaigns, fighting AIDS, and strengthening the decentralized health system. Additionally, USAID supports organizations such as PROSALUD and CIES in their efforts to expand the scope of health services available to the Bolivian people.

In the agriculture sector, USAID supports Bolivian government efforts to promote comprehensive alternative development in coca-producing zones. In the Chapare, Alternative Development has generated the equivalent of 62,000 agricultural jobs per year. Meanwhile, in the Yungas region, USAID works with 14,000 coffee-producing families. The cooperation program also supports 22,000 farmer families in the valleys by providing technical assistance to produce onions, coffee, hot peppers, black pepper, oregano and berries destined for domestic and foreign markets.

"As I depart Bolivia, I take with me the best possible memories of friendship, solidarity, and work, and I leave here USAID's commitment to continue working with you towards the development of this wonderful country," concluded Ayalde.